# WISCONSIN HOMELAND SECURITY COUNCIL

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### **Cyber Hygiene to Protect Your Business**

October is Cybersecurity Awareness Month in Wisconsin

(MADISON) – Wisconsin individuals and businesses lost over \$10 million in cyber theft in 2015. That's why Governor Walker has declared October as Cybersecurity Awareness Month in Wisconsin. Officials say many of those losses could have been prevented with a cyber hygiene campaign.

"Whether you own a small business or are part of a major corporation, practicing cyber hygiene is critical for business security," says Major General Don Dunbar, Adjutant General and Wisconsin's Homeland Security Advisor. "Following these five steps: Count, Configure, Control, Patch and Repeat could provide your agency with effective defenses against cyber attacks"

The Center for Internet Security and the National Governor's Association Governors Homeland Security Advisors Council launched the Cyber Hygiene Campaign that encourages individuals and businesses to follow these simple steps:

#### COUNT: Know what's connected to your network

- Identify authorized and unauthorized devices along with lost or stolen assets. You need to keep an inventory of computers, laptops, notebooks and smartphones that may be connected to your systems.
- Knowing what IT assets you own will allow you to better manage your IT infrastructure and its security.
- Every piece of equipment has vulnerabilities and exposes you to risk. How you handle the risk will depend on what the equipment is and what purpose it has.
- You can't protect what you don't know exist.

#### CONFIGURE: Protect your systems by implementing key security settings

- When purchasing new equipment, it is critical to reconfigure the security systems. Don't leave systems on default settings.
- Require employees to change passwords regularly. Strong passwords reduce the chance of accounts being compromised.

## CONTROL: Protecting your systems by properly managing accounts and limiting user and administrator privileges to only what they need to do their job.

 Properly controlling access to business information and systems reduces the risk of unauthorized access/use and security breaches.  Special care must be taken with "privileged accounts" used by system administrators, since they have the ability to create accounts and change or by-pass security settings.

#### PATCH: Protecting your systems by keeping current!

- Patch and vulnerability management is a security practice designed to proactively prevent the
  exploitation of IT vulnerabilities that exist within an organization.
- The expected result is to reduce the time and money spent dealing with vulnerabilities and exploitation of those vulnerabilities.

#### **REPEAT: Why is this step important?**

 Reviewing and repeating these steps regularly will help reduce your vulnerability to cyber attacks.

This October, ReadyWisconsin will highlight weekly efforts to keep everyone in Wisconsin safe from cybercrime. Visit http://readywisconsin.wi.gov for more information. You can also follow us on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram.

Current News Releases available at http://readywisconsin.wi.gov

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